

PETE STARK'S LEGISLATIVE REPORT

TAXES: PROTECTING THE MIDDLE CLASS

Congress has a long to do list before the end of the year, much of which will focus on how much Americans will pay in taxes. We need a tax code that is balanced, responsible, works for the middle class, and ensures that corporations and the very wealthy pay their fair share.

The Bush Tax Cuts are set to expire on January 1st. This is a great opportunity for Congress to restore fairness to our tax code while protecting low and middle-income workers from a tax hike. I stand with President Obama in supporting an extension of current tax rates for those with annual incomes under \$250,000 for married couples, while allowing tax cuts for the wealthy to expire.

At a time when we need to invest in our country to create jobs, we simply cannot afford to provide another tax cut to millionaires and billionaires.

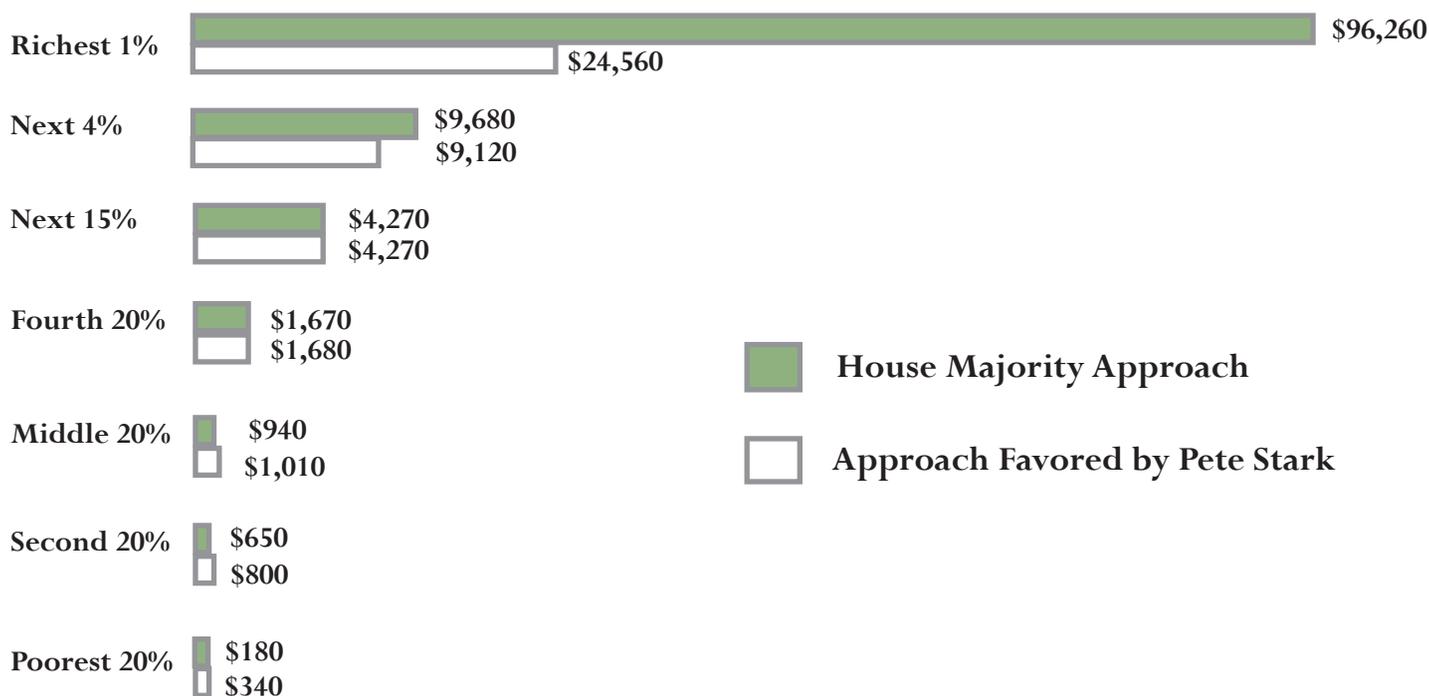
Unfortunately, protecting the middle class is not the priority of all Members of Congress. The House Majority's plan for major tax reform would overwhelmingly benefit the wealthiest households, as illustrated in the graph below.

Instead of closing tax loopholes, such as the one that allows billionaire Warren Buffett to pay a lower tax rate than his secretary, the House Majority's plan would double down on the Bush tax cuts and provide another tax cut for the wealthy.

It is fundamentally unfair to have a tax code that only works for the most well off at the expense of middle class Americans. I'll keep fighting to ensure our tax reforms are fiscally responsible, while also making sure that low- and middle-income people are protected.

AVERAGE TAX CUTS IN 2013 IN CALIFORNIA

House Majority Approach vs. Approach Favored by Pete Stark



Figures rounded to the nearest ten dollars. Source: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) microsimulation model, June 2012.

A VICTORY FOR AMERICA'S HEALTH

The importance of the decision by the Supreme Court to uphold the health reform law cannot be overstated. Millions of Americans are already benefitting from key provisions of the law that do away with some of the insurance industry's most egregious abuses. Millions more will obtain coverage when the law is fully implemented in 2014.

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Thanks to the law, more than 6.6 million young adults have been able to obtain coverage on their parents' health insurance policies, according to the non-profit The Commonwealth Fund; Americans of all ages get preventive benefits without cost sharing; senior citizens with high drug costs no longer face a gap in Medicare prescription drug coverage known as the donut hole;

children with pre-existing conditions cannot be denied health insurance; small businesses are benefiting from tax credits to help provide health insurance to their employees; and insurers must continue to pay rebates to their enrollees if they spend too much money on administration and CEO bonuses.

Starting in 2014, the law creates a new, fair marketplace for people to shop for coverage, provides tax credits to make sure coverage is affordable, and will end the ability of insurers to deny coverage to anyone based on pre-existing conditions.

Contrary to what the law's opponents are saying, the health reform law will not impose a "massive tax hike" on the middle class. The law is designed to prevent a

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LOCAL FOSTER YOUTH VISIT WASHINGTON

I was pleased to participate recently in Foster Youth Shadow Day. I met with two amazing young people—Jabari West from Hayward and Kevin Clark from Southern California—who joined me at meetings, a caucus with other Members of Congress, and at a Ways and Means hearing.

Kevin and Jabari shared their experiences in foster care, the challenges they have overcome, and their thoughts on what Congress needs to do to improve our child welfare

system. I was especially proud to be joined by Kevin and Jabari on the day that I joined other Members in introducing the A-Plus Act.



Rep. Stark with Jabari West (left) and Kevin Clark (right) in the Capitol Building.

The legislation will help foster youth succeed in school by removing bureaucratic barriers that often force foster youth to transfer schools, which prevents social workers from accessing a child's education records so they can best advocate for that child.

JOBS AND HOUSING INVE

I am pleased to announce the following federal awards that were granted to our

The Port of Oakland: \$15 million through the Department of Transportation's competitive Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. These funds will create jobs, improve rail access to and from the Port, and expand the Port's rail capacity.

Former NUMMI Employees: \$6 million from the Department of Labor will help continue reemployment and retraining services in order to assist them in finding new jobs and to develop high demand skills.

FREMONT'S CONGRESSIONAL ART WINNER

Angela Chen, a rising senior at Irvington High School in Fremont, is our district's winner of the 31st Annual Congressional Arts Competition. Her artwork, a self-portrait, is currently displayed in the U.S. Capitol along with the winning art from Congressional Districts across the country.

I'm very proud to have such a talented young artist representing our district in Washington over the next year as her artwork hangs in the Capitol for passersby to see.

"I was really surprised," remarked Chen, on being notified of her win. "I wasn't expecting it at all." Her piece, an assignment from art class, is a colored pencil reproduction of a photograph Chen took of herself.



Rep. Stark welcomed Fremont's Angela Chen to Washington, D.C. in June. She is the CA-13 District winner of the 2012 Congressional Art Competition.

Chen has been making art since the age of five. "I first got started when my mom signed my sister and I up for art classes, and I've stuck with it ever since," explained Chen, as she sat awaiting a tour of the Capitol Building.

Chen says she hopes to attend art school in the future and to pursue a career in entertainment design.

Accompanied by her mother and sister to Washington, Chen gave a frank observation of a summer visit to the District of Columbia: "It's hot!" she said, but explained that she was enjoying her visit.

Chen cited her mother's encouragement as a key in her passion for making art.

PROTECTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Women are paid 77 cents for every dollar that men earn. Today's economy makes it difficult for a woman to individually file a workplace discrimination case against an employer for fear of being terminated and unable to find another job. That is why collective action -- the ability to band together as a "class" and take an employer to court -- is essential to fighting workplace discrimination.

Unfortunately, this right was taken away last year when the Supreme Court overturned the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' ruling in favor of women in *Wal-Mart v. Dukes*. Nearly 1.5 million women had joined Betty Dukes and won their fight against

systematic gender disparity in pay and promotion in Wal-Mart stores across the nation. However, the Supreme Court denied these women the ability to form a class -- putting yet another obstacle in front of those who want to challenge gender discrimination in the workplace.

We need a legislative fix for this detrimental ruling. I'm an original co-sponsor of the *Equal Employment Opportunity Restoration Act*, H.R. 5978, which would undo the impact of the ruling by allowing any group of employees to collectively challenge employment discrimination. I will continue to fight for this and other efforts to ensure all Americans are afforded equal rights.

INVESTMENTS IN THE EAST BAY

community in recent weeks; I will continue working to bring federal funds home.

Alameda County and Hayward Police Departments: \$7.4 million in funding to hire veterans as police officers, which is part of the Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program.

Veterans Housing: \$279,249 will go to the Alameda Housing Authority from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to support the development of 75 units of affordable housing for homeless vets through a partnership with the Department of Veterans affairs.



CONGRESSMAN PETE STARK
 39300 Civic Center Drive, Suite 220
 Fremont • California • 94538

petemail@mail.house.gov
 www.stark.house.gov
 (510) 494-1388

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Pete Stark
 M.C.
 PRESORTED STANDARD

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handful of individuals from “free-riding” off the health care system and thus increasing the cost of care for the rest of us. Those who refuse to get health insurance, but don’t meet hardship standards built into the law to protect those with lower incomes, will pay a small fee.

Only two to five percent of Americans would be subject to the fee, according to the Urban Institute. In contrast, all Americans will gain access to affordable,

quality health care.

While this decision is a victory for the health of all Americans, we know that the law faces additional challenges from those who still seek to undermine it. I am proud to have helped author the Affordable Care Act and you can count on me to continue to stand tall to protect this law so affordable, quality health care is a reality for each and every American.

UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS SATURDAY, JULY 21ST

PLEASANTON

9:00 AM — 10:00 AM

Pleasanton City Hall, Council Chambers
 200 Old Bernal Avenue

UNION CITY

11:00 AM — 12:00 PM

Ruggieri Senior Center
 33997 Alvarado Niles Road

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OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

Fremont Office

39300 Civic Center Drive, Suite 220
 Fremont, California 94538
 (510) 494-1388

Washington, DC Office

239 Cannon HOB
 Washington, DC 20515
 (202) 225-5065